

CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting

February 6, 2014

Present: Richard Harper, C.K. Boyle, Gail Fulton, Mary McTamane
Phil Prinzivalli, Chuck Thomas, Chad Wade

Attendees: Peter Smith (Watershed subcommittee) Natalie MacKinstrie, Jessica Bacher (Pace), Jeff LeJava (Pace), Chung Leong Chan (Yale), George Profous (Region 3 DEC), Decora Sandiford (SOHK), John Gebhards (QCWA), Simon Gruber (HR Watershed Alliance)

1. **Roll Call.** The meeting came to order at 6:30pm. A quorum was present.
2. **Pace Introductions.** Jessica Bacher reported that Pace can help on two fronts: a) Guiding the streamlining so that it is built into the current process, and b) ensuring we have the resources to make advisory opinions when referrals come in. Jeff LeJava: Pace secured a grant from the NYS Water Resources Institute to study how green infrastructure can be incorporated into the rules and regulations. Discussion about the key issue of lack of communication among departments. What is the status of the streamlining process? Pace is building 'compliance' into the new forms and will meet with Steve Hunter on February 19 to begin reviewing them. Sidewalk Permits don't have referrals for trees incorporated yet, but a new CDBG sidewalk replacement program has begun. Lack of inter-departmental communications continues to impede our work with DEC, and other agencies. There was board consensus that this is a management issue.
 - **LWRP:** CAC can only use the current old version to make advisory opinions. There is urgency in completing the revisions. Harbor Management is becoming critical with Port Newburgh and Consolidated Iron. The discussion revealed continued piecemeal information and confusion among guests and board members as to the status of recouping grant money from the State, number of hours required to make revisions, what the specific revisions are, relation between LWRP and Re-Zoning. Jessica will speak with Ian for a first-hand report. We must resolve this quickly in order for the CAC's work to progress. Ian will be invited to our 3/13 meeting.
 - **Special Meetings with Pace:** Jessica suggested special monthly meeting for 3 months. Spring plantings, sidewalk replacements, and façade programs are overlapping with the outdated process. Jessica will suggest CAC be added to the site plan stamps for referral. Chad will also note at Planning Meetings. Richard will coordinate with Jessica to set a schedule for the 'streamlining' meetings.
3. **Budget.** Kippy Boyle presented an invoice for \$24.93 office supplies. Vouchers will be honored after a Chair is appointed. For future purchases, comptroller's office can give us the tax exempt number.
4. **Standing Committee Reports.**
 - **Air Quality:** Phil Prinzivalli
 - Phil suggested air quality sensors or hand-held monitors for the future.
 - **LWRP:** Chuck Thomas & Peter Smith. (See discussion above.)
 - Peter offered to help the Planning Department, but internal City issues have stalled any progress.
 - **Open Space & Natural Resource Inventory:** Chad Wade, Peter Smith.
 - The Map was updated using the GIS map from Engineering. The Data sets will be organized based on 'perceived open space' (regardless of private or public) which includes campuses, cemeteries, waterfront, steep slopes, the street grid. Chad will bring an updated version of the Map to the March meeting so we can have a reference during our discussions. We will add layers over time, which will include compliance layers. John Gebhards: possibly get the Town of Newburgh to include compliance layers on their maps. Richard: we need the reference map now at each meeting. GIS has several categories; we can select a few for the reference map for now.

- **Parks:** Gail Fulton & Mary McTamanev.
 - Mary will meet with Downing Park Planning Committee to discuss their plans for 2014 and what needs to be done. Richard noted that the Council Work Session agenda includes a resolution to create a Department of Recreation and to hire a director. This might have ramifications for Downing Park.
- **Urban Forestry:** Phil Prinzivalli & Kippy Boyle.
 - George Profous (DEC Region 3 Urban Forester) met with the subcommittee. He needs confirmation whether or not the City will host a regional DEC Workshop. We will re-send our request to City Manager which wasn't answered by him or by Courtney Kain.
 - Discussion of Greening Broadway and leveraging with other programs such as Façade Program, Transit plans for Broadway, e-design. George requests review of our site maps for tree plantings (see photos and guidelines attached).
 - April 25th Arbor Day: Proclamation will be revised to read "last Friday in April" for use every year
 - Approval of London planes for Montgomery Street and another location . Order soon through Devitts – Under \$200, 2 ¼" caliper (@10-12')
- **Watershed:** Peter Smith, Chuck Thomas.
 - QCWA – An Environmental Justice grant centered around Muchattoes lake. A companion grant is for a green infrastructure study through Clearwater (e-design). The 2 grants are being integrated with engineering and focusing generally on the eastern part of the city. Watershed outside of the City isn't included in this. Peter suggests that the City's Water-sharing and sewer-sharing agreements should be reviewed. John G: OCWA and OC are finalizing the Watershed Management Plan (4 municipalities), and is open to suggestions on how the CAC can be brought into the Plan.
- Rt. 300 Development/Washington Lake Drinking Water. CAC, OCWA, and City Engineering read letters into the Minutes at the January 16th Town of Newburgh Planning Board public hearing regarding site plan approvals. CAC also attended the County IDA public hearing on January 14th . This coordinated effort gained public and City Council attention, resulting in meetings between the Town and City. These coordinated efforts must continue. The Town Planning Board meets on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays. Chad will notify us. Simon Gruber noted that drinking water is the centerpiece of our public health. Peter asked what tools are available to protect the drinking water. A) CAC is a bully-pulpit of sorts; b) being an involved agency through SEQRA is a possible way, c) Washington Lake is considered a Park, which might change the Type of action; d) possible overlay conservation zone for the Town; e) New Windsor did something similar for Brown's Pond; f) if only 1 County IDA member was at the public hearing, that might be an illegal meeting; g) possibly refer to Riverkeeper; h) other irregularities of the meeting and its attorney.

5. Old Business.

- Office Space & Support: No response from Acting City Manager to Chuck Thomas' 12/23 email regarding office space and support. Chuck will be meeting with the ACM and will bring it up again.
- Secretarial Services: There is \$5000 in our budget for secretarial services. Natalie is available, but the City has issues with the State regarding independent contractors. Mary McTamanev: Motion to Contract with Natalie MacKinstrie for 2014 secretarial services
Gail Futon: Motion seconded
VOTE: Unanimously approved
Richard will set up a meeting with Corporation Counsel.
- CAC letters to City departments. Mary distributed a draft letter to go to departments and other committees to ensure they're aware of the CAC, its structure and its responsibilities.
- Web Page basic information will be available for now. Photos needed which represent our CAC. Peter will forward the aerial photo delineating the watershed. Members please forward "important links" to add to the page.

6. New Business

- Decora Sandiford, from Clearwater and Groundworks shared plans for a County trail starting behind the Armory, through the wooded area to a rain garden on the side (40 foot model of Quassaick Creek). The urban trail would cross Rt 32, linking up to Muchattoes Lake . 56 trees/shrubs have been planted previously. 18-month timeframe to implement, opening in sections at a time. Discussion of the skate park, the strip mall/plaza, and how this 'gateway' can all be coordinated.
- Hudsonia Biodiversity Training. Chad will prepare the application, which is March 3. Board consensus is in favor of participating as a team in this free opportunity, and opening it up to other commission/boards. The biodiversity study can become part of the open space/natural resource inventory. An Urban environment biodiversity study poses unique challenges. See Attached Application Form.
- Port of Newburgh. Mary outlined the "Port of Newburgh" proposal at the southern end of the City at Steelways. Geographically well-positioned with river/rail to contract for the Tappan Zee rebuild. Is the "Port" a marketing term, or is it a legal term requiring a level of oversight. Regulatory agencies are giving sequential permits and appear to be working together. Can we secure any public benefit such as a right-of-way along Quassaick Creek? Parkland, Rowing Club, Harbor Management, Quassaick trail. City and CAC need to be vocal about what we need while the opportunity exists. The project is being fast-tracked. Consensus of Board is that we should pursue the Pubic Benefits possibilities. Lobby the City Council. Current LWRP could hamper action. Suggest identify the public benefits and get out in front of it – repair road when done, trail, markers, trail benefits, etc. Consistency Review will still be required, and Planning Board approval required.
- Transporting Crude Oil. John G asked about plans to transport and unload crude oil at Global and possibly Steelways. Global and Steelways are contiguous. How would industrial river transform the shoreline?
- Meet with Acting City Manager & others: Schedule a meeting, have agenda topics, what other city staff should attend?

8. General Information/Upcoming Events

- Re-Zoning – OC Planning Federation training at the Library, 8th & 12th. Chad to add CAC to their mailing.
- Kelly Dobbins – County contact working with Watershed Management Plan.
- Distressed Properties information meeting on the 19th. 7pm Land Bank/GNP

K. Boyle: Motion to adjourn

C. Wade: Motion seconded

Vote: Unanimously approved

The Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm

NEXT MEETING – MARCH 13, 6:30 pm. The 2014 Meeting Schedule will be posted online.